

# Helpful Tests for You and Your Baby



### **What do these tests involve?**

A blood sample is taken from your arm.

### **Will these tests harm me or my baby?**

There are no risks associated with the test.

### **Why do I need to have these tests?**

Although you may not feel ill, if left undetected these infections can cause serious damage to you and your baby.

These tests are recommended to protect your health through early treatment and care and to greatly reduce any risk of passing on an infection to your baby, partner, or other family members.

### **When will I get my results?**

Results will usually be available and discussed with you at your next prenatal visit and recorded in your notes.

A health professional will contact you if you have a positive screening test result for HIV, syphilis, or hepatitis B to arrange appointments to discuss your results and refer you to specialist services.

When you're pregnant, it is important to take good care of yourself and protect the new life growing inside you. From following a healthy diet to getting prenatal care, you want to make sure you and your baby are as healthy as possible. As part of good prenatal care, health care professionals routinely recommend certain blood tests to pregnant women to detect infections and other illnesses. The tests can help you to make choices about care or treatment during your pregnancy or after your baby is born.



## TEST

### What is it? Why is it important?

#### Blood Type and RH Factor

A person's blood type is either A, B, AB, or O. Every pregnant woman should know her blood type in case she needs blood when she is having her baby.

Rh factor is either "negative" or "positive." If a mother is Rh negative and her baby is Rh positive, the mother's body can make proteins that may harm the baby's red blood cells. A woman who is Rh negative may need a special treatment to protect her baby.

#### CBC

CBC is a complete blood count. This test shows the kinds and numbers of cells in the blood. It gives general health information.

#### Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is a virus that infects the liver. If a pregnant woman has hepatitis B, in most cases, her baby can get treatment at birth to prevent infection.

There are also other forms of hepatitis. A pregnant woman may get tested for them, too.

#### HIV

HIV is a virus that weakens the body's defense against disease and can lead to AIDS. If a woman has HIV; she can pass it to her baby during pregnancy, during labor, or through breastfeeding. If an HIV infection is found before a woman gives birth, doctors can treat her with drugs that fight HIV. These drugs greatly reduce the risk of the baby being infected. The earlier in pregnancy that treatment begins, the smaller the chance that the baby will be infected with HIV.

#### Rubella (German Measles) Immunity

Rubella is a viral disease that causes a fever and rash. Rubella is usually mild in children and adults, but it is very contagious. If a pregnant woman gets rubella, it can cause severe problems for her baby. Many women have had a vaccine and are immune to (cannot get) rubella. Pregnant women who are not immune can get the vaccine after their baby is born to keep them from getting rubella in the future.

#### Syphilis

Syphilis is a bacterial disease. It may not cause symptoms at first, but can progress and harm many parts of the body. A pregnant woman who has syphilis can pass it to her baby. Treating syphilis early in the pregnancy is the best way to keep the baby from getting it. If left untreated, syphilis can cause serious health problems for the baby and the mother.



# ONE TEST TWO LIVES

Get tested for HIV. For you and baby.™

## TO LEARN MORE

If you would like to learn more about HIV screening, visit CDC's Get Tested Website at <https://gettested.cdc.gov/>.

You also can contact CDC-INFO.

Online: <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/dcs/ContactUs/Form>

Phone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)

1-888-232-6348 (TTY)

English or Spanish

Monday–Friday

8:00 AM to 8:00 PM EST

Your call is free and private.